Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A method for conferring tolerance to salt stress and drought stress in a monocotyledonous plant comprising:

transforming the monocotyledonous plant with an expression cassette comprising at least one abscisic acid response complex unit, a minimal promoter ~~necessary and sufficient for promoter activity~~, and a DNA molecule that increases tolerance to salt stress and drought stress in plants, wherein the at least one abscisic acid response complex unit, the minimal promoter, and a DNA molecule are operably linked together to permit expression of the DNA molecule ~~in leaves or roots of the plant~~, and wherein the minimal promoter is Act1-100 of rice, a truncated α-amylase promoter of barley or rice which retains its function, a truncated maize ubiquitin promoter which retains its function, or a truncated CaMV 35S promoter which retains its function; and

expressing the DNA molecule in the monocotyledonous plant to confer tolerance to salt stress and drought stress in the plant.

2. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the monocotyledonous plant is selected from the group consisting of rice, wheat, maize, barley, oat, rye, millet, and sorghum.

3. (previously presented) The method according to claim 2, wherein the monocotyledonous plant is rice.

4. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the DNA molecule that increases tolerance to salt stress and drought stress is selected from the group consisting of a Δ^1-pyrroline-5-carboxylate synthetase gene, *P5CS* -129A, *Hva1*, COR47, a mannitol 1-P-dehydrogenase gene, a gene for the biosynthesis of polyamines, and a gene for the biosynthesis of glycine betaine, trehalose, D-ononitol or fructans.

Claim 5 (canceled)

6. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the at least one abscisic acid response complex unit is from a barley *HVA22* gene or a barley *HVA1* gene.

7. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the expression cassette comprises up to four of the abscisic acid response complex units operably linked together.

8. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the expression cassette further comprises:

a DNA sequence coding a selectable marker.

9. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the expression cassette is salt stress or drought stress inducible.

10. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said transforming comprises:

propelling particles at cells of the monocotyledonous plant under conditions effective for the particles to penetrate into the cell interior and

introducing a plasmid comprising the at least one abscisic acid response complex unit, the minimal promoter, and the DNA molecule that increases tolerance to salt stress and drought stress in plants into the cell interior.

11. (previously presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein the plasmid is selected from the group consisting of pJS112, pJP21, and pJPM001.

12. (previously presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein the plasmid is associated with the particles, whereby the plasmid is carried into the cell interior together with the particles.

13. (previously presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein the plasmid surrounds the cell and is drawn into the cell interior with the particles.

14. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said transforming comprises:

contacting tissue of the monocotyledonous plant with an inoculum of a bacterium of the genus *Agrobacterium*, wherein the bacterium is transformed with a plasmid

comprising the at least one abscisic acid response complex unit, the minimal promoter, and the DNA molecule that increases tolerance to salt stress and drought stress in plants.

15. (previously presented) The method according to claim 14, wherein the plasmid is selected from the group consisting of pJS112, pJP21, and pJPM001.

16. (previously presented) The method according to claim 14, wherein the bacterium of the genus *Agrobacterium* is *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*.

17. (previously presented) The method according to claim 14, wherein the tissue is selected from protoplasts, cells, or calli derived from mature embryo or immature embryo of rice, wheat, maize, barley, oat, rye, millet, or sorghum.

Claims 18-36 (canceled)

37. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the expression cassette further comprises an Hva22 intron.

38. (new) The method according to claim 1, wherein the expression cassette is contained in a plasmid selected from the group consisting of pJS112, pJP21, and pJPM001.

39. (new) The method according to claim 38, wherein the plasmid is pJS112.

40. (new) The method according to claim 38, wherein the plasmid is pJP21.

41. (new) The method according to claim 38, wherein the plasmid is pJPM001.

42. (new) The method according to claim 11, wherein the plasmid is pJS112.

43. (new) The method according to claim 11, wherein the plasmid is pJP21.

44. (new) The method according to claim 11, wherein the plasmid is pJPM001.

45. (new) The method according to claim 15, wherein the plasmid is pJS112.

46. (new) The method according to claim 15, wherein the plasmid is pJP21.

47. (new) The method according to claim 15, wherein the plasmid is pJPM001.